

## Claims

5           [1]       A method of roasted coffee beans treatment, wherein a steam treatment is effected on the roasted coffee beans by supplying steam thereto under a flowing condition thereof.

10           [2]       The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1, wherein the roasted coffee beans are accommodated in a bean accommodating portion having a steam supply passage and a steam exhaust passage and the steam treatment is effected by flowing the steam from the steam supply passage to the steam exhaust passage such that the steam is exhausted from the steam exhaust passage at an outlet pressure higher than the atmospheric pressure.

15           [3]       The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the roasted coffee beans comprise whole roasted beans and ground roasted beans which can pass a mesh of an aperture of 1.7 mm and the amount of the ground roasted beans is 70 weight % or less.

20           [4]       The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1 or 2, wherein that the roasted coffee beans comprise whole roasted beans.

25           [5]       The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the amount of steam used in the steam treatment is 10 weight % or more of the weight of the roasted coffee beans.

30           [6]       The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1 or 2, wherein that the steam comprises saturated steam.

[7] The method of roasted coffee beans treatment according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the steam has a temperature of from 100 to 230°C.

5 [8] Steam treated roasted coffee beans which have received a steam treatment by supplying steam to the beans under a flowing condition thereof, the resulting roasted coffee beans having an extraction ratio of 35% or more, a sum of an amount of formic acid and an amount of acetic acid relative to the roasted coffee beans being 0.25 weight % or less.

10 [9] The steam treated coffee beans according to claim 8, wherein the roasted coffee beans are accommodated in a bean accommodating portion having a steam supply passage and a steam exhaust passage and the steam treatment is effected by flowing saturated steam of from 100 to 230°C from the steam supply passage to the steam  
15 exhaust passage such that the steam is exhausted from the steam exhaust passage at an outlet pressure higher than the atmospheric pressure.